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SUBJECT: A/S KIMMITT'S OCTOBER 15-16 VISIT TO OSLO

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Kevin M. Johnson
for reasons 1.4 b and d

1.(C) Summary: PM A/S Mark Kimmitt met with senior Norwegian officials in Oslo on October 15-16 for discussions on Norway's High North initiative and Norway's activities in Afghanistan in support of ISAF. Kimmitt met with the Deputy Defense Minister Espen Barth Eide, the Prime Minister's National Security Advisor Ingvard Havnen, and the MFA's political advisor Vegard Ellefsen. In light of Norway's upcoming decision on its fighter aircraft purchase, A/S Kimmitt emphasized U.S. interest in Norway's defense capabilities while noting "I'm not here to sell you airplanes." Kimmitt also briefed the officials on the situation in Iraq, and raised U.S. concerns over Norway's approach to the proposed CCW cluster munitions protocol. End Summary

Stroking the Norwegians on High North

12. (C) Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs Mark Kimmitt raised Russia and Norway's engagement in the High North with all his interlocutors. He praised Norway's activity in the region and its efforts to get NATO to focus more on the core areas. A/S Kimmitt stressed increased U.S.-High North engagement, noting broad support for Norway's initiative and our shared interest in cooperation in the region and in dealing with Russia. He noted the upcoming release of our Arctic Policy and mentioned plans for U/S Dobriansky to travel to the region to brief Norway and other regional nations on this policy.

Urging a Fighter Decision Based on Capability, Not Politics

13. (C) A/S Kimmitt was careful about directly raising Norway's upcoming decision on whether to buy the F-35 or the Swedish Gripen in his meetings, telling the Norwegians up front that "I'm not here to sell you an airplane, but we are interested in a transparent decision-making process based upon capabilities." At a private dinner A/S Kimmitt spoke at length with Deputy Defense Minister Eide who indicated that things appeared to be moving in a positive direction, but argued the best thing the U.S. could do was to "shut up" about JSF and not make any noise about denying AESA radar to the Swedes. Should the U.S. appear to be pressing on those topics, Eide said, it could potentially scuttle an otherwise transparent process and build sympathy for Sweden.

Afghanistan

14. (C) In his meetings, A/S Kimmitt highlighted the need for support to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and asked Norway to contribute \$7 million annually from 2010-2014 to NATO's ANA sustainability trust fund. GON interlocutors did not respond directly, but said they agreed with the importance of this effort along with improvements in civilian assistance. A/S Kimmitt mentioned three reasons for optimism in Afghanistan:

¶1. Both POTUS candidates have indicated strong interest in an increase of U.S. support in Afghanistan; 2. The upcoming Afghan strategy review; 3. The appointment of General Petraeus as new theater commander and the application of lessons learned in Iraq.

Iraq

¶5. (C) A/S Kimmitt noted need for engagement and the helpful role Norwegian expertise could play. The Norwegians did not respond directly and appeared well aware of how their assistance could be directed in Iraq, but were clearly not interested in establishing a diplomatic presence yet. (Note: The GON clearly has no appetite to engage in Iraq before the new U.S. presidential administration. Post nevertheless presses at every opportunity the importance of action on Iraq and is working with the Iraqi Ambassador to encourage Norway to open an embassy in Baghdad and to increase its engagement).

No movement on Cluster Munitions

¶6. (C) A/S Kimmitt pressed all his interlocutors on the need to work together on mitigating the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and asked the Norwegians for help in facilitating a CCW agreement which could be complimentary to the Dublin treaty. The Norwegians listened politely but did not budge from (their perceived) need to stick to "principles" on CCM. A/S Kimmitt pointed out that pushing only for CCM would allow those countries possessing the large amounts of cluster munitions (e.g., China, Russia, Pakistan, and India) to avoid any steps to improve their cluster munitions policies. The Norwegians appeared unconvinced by this argument. Comment: The Foreign Minister himself maintains that any outside agreement on cluster munitions would legitimize their continued use and destroy the international norm created by the Dublin treaty. This position is unlikely to change. End Comment.

First Impressions are Important

¶7. (C) A/S Kimmitt also pointed out that the GON should note that three Norwegian decisions currently under consideration (Afghanistan, cluster munitions, JSF) will to a great degree form the first impressions for the next administration.

¶8. (U) A/S Kimmitt cleared on this message.
JOHNSON